

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 049155
ORIGIN INR-05

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SP-02 SS-14 NSCE-00 CIAE-00 PM-03
INRE-00 SSO-00 NEA-07 /032 R

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV NIACT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

S E C R E T STATE 049155

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV, SY, SA, IS

SUBJECT: DAYAN'S ASSERTION ABOUT SAUDI-SYRIAN MILITARY
COOPERATION

REF: (A) DAMASCUS 1020 (NOTAL); (B) STATE 42823

SECRET/NOT RELEASABLE TO FOREIGN NATIONALS

1. DAYAN HAS EXAGGERATED THE EXTENT OF SAUDI MILITARY
PARTICIPATION AND COORDINATION WITH THE SYRIANS. IN
OCTOBER 1973 THE SAUDIS DEPLOYED ONE INFANTRY BRIGADE
TO SYRIA. AS AMBASSADOR MURPHY NOTED (REF A) THE BRIGADE
WAS CLEARLY DEPLOYED AS AN EXHIBITION OF SAUDI-SYRIAN

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POLITICAL SOLIDARITY DURING THE HOSTILITIES. DEPARTING
SAUDI ARABIA OCTOBER 12, THE BRIGADE PACED ITSELF SLOWLY
THROUGH JORDAN. THE EARLIEST INDICATION OF THE ARRIVAL
OF ANY OF THE BRIGADE'S UNITS TO SYRIA OCCURRED ON
OCTOBER 20, WHEN THE SAUDI ARMORED CAR BATTALION CAME
UNDER ISRAELI FIRE AND SUFFERED SOME CASUALTIES. WE HAVE
NO EVIDENCE THAT THE SAUDIS RETURNED THE FIRE AND

INFLICTED ANY CASUALTIES ON THE ISRAELIS, NOR DO WE HAVE ANY FURTHER EVIDENCE OF SAUDI PARTICIPATION IN THE FIGHTING BEYOND THIS SOLE INCIDENT ON OCTOBER 20. (SECRET)

2. THREE YEARS LATER, ON OCTOBER 7, 1976, THE SAUDI BRIGADE DEPARTED SYRIA. RECENTLY, IN DESCRIBING TO SEVERAL US SENATORS THE DECISION TO PULL BACK SAUDI TROOPS FROM SYRIA, PRINCE FAHD ASSERTED THAT, "WE WITHDREW ALL OF OUR TROOPS JUST TO PROVE THAT WE WERE NOT GOING TO FIGHT (ISRAEL)."

3. THE "JOINT WAR GAMES" MENTIONED BY DAYAN REFER TO A SAUDI EXERCISE CONDUCTED IN SYRIA IN NOVEMBER 1975 SOLELY BY SAUDI FORCES. ON NOVEMBER 6, 1975 THREE FLIGHTS OF F-5E AIRCRAFT, WHICH HAD FLOWN FROM TAIF TO PRINCE HASSAN AIRBASE IN NORTHEAST JORDAN FOR THE OCCASION, FLEW FROM HASSAN TO DUMAYR AIRBASE NEAR DAMASCUS. WITHOUT AT ANY TIME LANDING IN SYRIA, THESE PLANES CONDUCTED BOMBING, STRAFING, AIR-TO-GROUND ROCKET, AND PHOTO RECONNAISSANCE DEMONSTRATIONS. AS PART OF THE EXERCISE, SOME AIRBORNE TROOPS PARACHUTED FROM C-130'S. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT SAUDI C-130'S MADE REGULAR USE OF A SYRIAN AIRFIELD DURING THE PERIOD WHILE THE BRIGADE MENTIONED IN PARA 1 WAS DEPLOYED WITHIN SYRIA. (SECRET/NOFORN) VANCE

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NOTE BY OCT: LIMDIS CAPTION ADDED PER INSTRUCTIONS S/S-O

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